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060653Z Jun 05

UNCLAS ABU DHABI 002500

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR DRL, NEA/ARPI, AND NEA/PPD

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL PHUM KIRF KISL TC](#)

SUBJECT: RELIGIOUS LEADERS DISCUSS QU'RAN DESECRATION

REF: (A) STATE 88240, (B) STATE 90992, (C) ABU DHABI 2179

[1](#)1. (SBU) DURING A MEETING MAY 24 WITH UAE RELIGIOUS ADVISOR, DR. ALI AL HASHEMI, AND A MEETING MAY 31 WITH MINISTRY OF JUSTICE UNDER SECRETARY FOR ISLAMIC AFFAIRS, DR. MOHAMED JUMA AL MEHAIRI, POL CHIEF DISCUSSED THE CONTROVERSY SURROUNDING THE DESECRATION OF THE HOLY QU'RAN AT THE DETENTION FACILITY AT GUANTANAMO BAY. BOTH AL HASHEMI AND AL MEHAIRI CALLED THE DESECRATION INCIDENTS ACTS BY "IRRESPONSIBLE" PEOPLE. THEY SAID THAT THE USG WAS NOT TO BLAME, BUT IT WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, INCLUDING RELIGIOUS RIGHTS. THEY CALLED FOR THE PROSECUTION OF THOSE INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE FOUND RESPONSIBLE FOR DESECRATING THE QU'RAN. POL CHIEF PROVIDED COPIES OF THE SECRETARY'S MAY 12 REMARKS ON RESPECT FOR THE QU'RAN. BOTH OFFICIALS APPLAUDED THE USG'S CONDEMNATION OF THESE ACTIONS. THE AMBASSADOR HAD DISCUSSED THE ALLEGATION THAT THE QU'RAN HAD BEEN DESECRATED AND THE SECRETARY'S REMARKS WITH MFA UNDER SECRETARY ABDULLAH RASHID AL

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NOAIMI ON MAY 14 (REF C).

[1](#)2. (SBU) THE VISITS TO MEET WITH THE RELIGIOUS ADVISOR AND THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE'S UNDER SECRETARY FOR ISLAMIC AFFAIRS WERE PLANNED AS PART OF OUR ONGOING OUTREACH TO THE DIFFERENT RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES AND AS PART OF OUR PREPARATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN THE UAE. POL CHIEF AND POL ASSISTANT NOTED THE UAE'S RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE, AND EXPRESSED OUR INTEREST IN MAINTAINING A DIALOGUE WITH RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS OFFICIALS.

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